(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Provisions of various labour laws are applicable to the establishments who engage the contract labour and whenever any violation of labour laws is reported, necessary action is taken by the Industrial Relation machinery of the State Governments and the Central Government in their respective spheres.

Auction of oil and gas blocks

*34. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to launch its biggest ever auction of oil and gas exploration blocks under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)-VIII shortly;

(b) if so, whether the Global firms have been invited for bidding the oil and gas exploration blocks under NELP-VIII;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the awarding of such blocks to companies will have any effect on the imports of oil and gas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (e) The Government of India approved the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in 1997 and it became effective in 1999. Since then licenses for exploration of oil and gas are being awarded through global competitive bidding system. Seven rounds of bidding have so far been completed under NELP. The number of blocks and contractual terms proposed to be offered under the forthcoming eighth round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VIII) has not been finalized. Global players will be invited when this round takes place.

The exploration activities in the new exploration blocks under NELP-VIII are likely to result in increased production of crude oil and natural gas, thereby enhancing the energy security of the country.

Dubious functioning of Satyam Computer Services

†*35.SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent exposure of the dubious role of Satyam Computer Services and the Price Water House Audit company has shaken the confidence of investors in companies;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there had been indication relating to the abovesaid company working in a dubious manner for many years;

(d) if so, whether Government has chalked out any additional measures to maintain a strict vigil on the working of companies; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi